

*House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public*

*Lands Schedules January 21 Hearing on Congressman's Bill*

*Thursday, January 21, 2010*

*10:00am*

*Room 1324, Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC*

*Webcast: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>*

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands will hold a hearing on a bill the congressman introduced last year that would authorize the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a study on whether the Hudson River Valley should become a unit of the National Park system. The subcommittee's hearing, which will be led by Chairman Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), will take place on Thursday, January 21, 2010 beginning at 10am. Hinchey, a representative for the NPS, and others will testify on the congressman's bill at the hearing.

Hinchey's bill, H.R. 4003 -- the Hudson River Valley Special Resource Study Act, is one of several bills for which the subcommittee is holding a hearing so it is unclear exactly when debate on Hinchey's bill will begin. Members of the press, who can view a live webcast of the hearing at <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>, are encouraged to contact Hinchey's office for additional time information on the day of the hearing.

"This hearing will help draw attention to the Hudson River Valley and highlight the reasons why I think the National Park Service should proceed with a study that could lead to the area becoming a unit of the National Park System," Hinchey said. "I'm very grateful to full Committee Chairman Rahall and Subcommittee Chairman Grijalva for scheduling this hearing and providing the forum to discuss the natural, and historical significance of the Hudson River Valley. This hearing continues to move this important bill through the legislative process. Were the Hudson River Valley to become a unit of the National Park Service it would enhance the region's national identity while making the region eligible for a vast increase in federal resources and support."

In order for the Hudson River Valley to become part of the National Park System, a congressionally-authorized NPS study must be conducted. Hinchey's legislation would authorize such a study from Fort Edward in Washington County down through Westchester County. If the NPS's study finds that the Hudson

River Valley would be a good fit as part of the National Park System then subsequent legislation would be needed to make that designation. Hinchey said he would immediately introduce the necessary legislation.

Hinchey's bill outlines specific guidelines to ensure that the NPS study recognizes the realities of the Hudson River Valley. These guidelines require the NPS to closely examine park unit models, in particular national river and recreation areas, as well as other landscape protection models, that: encompass large areas of non-federal lands within their designated boundaries; foster public and private collaborative arrangements for achieving NPS objectives, and protect and respect the rights of private land owners. No forced land acquisition activities would be permitted.

Hinchey has long sought greater recognition, protection, and resources for the Hudson River Valley. As a member of the New York State Assembly, Hinchey authored the legislation that led to the creation of the Hudson River Valley Greenway and in Congress he authored legislation that led to the designation of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, which provides technical assistance to local communities or local managers to assist them in managing natural and historic sites of national importance.

